

## Exploration and Discovery.

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### THE IMPORTANT WORK OF DR. CONRAD SCHICK.

In the death of Herr Baurat Conrad Schick, M.A., Ph.D. (Tübingen), Jerusalem has lost one of her most able and devoted biblical archæologists, a man whose long life was spent with rare single-heartedness in the interpretation of the problems of ancient Jerusalem.

Conrad Schick was born in a little village in Württemberg, in January, 1812. He was the fifth son in a family of eleven. From the village school he went to Kornthal, a kind of missionary training institution, where he learned Latin, and—as was the custom there—a trade, that of blacksmith. Later he went to the Chrishona institution at Basle, where he was studying when selected by Herr Spittler as one of the two *Pilgrimbrüder* who, as pioneers (so he conceived it) of a great missionary movement, were to go to Jerusalem. Before setting out, young Conrad Schick was apprenticed to a watch- and clock-maker, in order that he might thoroughly know this business, which it was thought would be useful in the Holy City. In 1846 he left for Jerusalem, and the new work was started. It did not, however, prove a great success, and before long both the “pilgrim brothers” had to find employment of some other kind, so that in 1850 Schick accepted an appointment as superintendent (*Hausvater*) of the House of Industry in Jerusalem—an institution established by the London Jews’ Society for the support of recent Christian converts and young Jewish inquirers after Christianity; this position he retained for thirty-seven years.

Conrad Schick had at an early age shown an aptitude for making models. Before leaving Germany he had made a careful model of the tabernacle in the wilderness, and it was this gift which first brought him before the public. Immediately after the Crimean war the question of the repair of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher came prominently before some of the great ecclesiastics of Europe; and, in order to explain what was needed, Schick, who was then the only architect resident in the city, made, with the assistance of his young pupils in the House of Industry, some fine models of the church, which were sent to Constantinople, Moscow, and Stuttgart. These led him into

correspondence with some of the savants of Europe, who put before him problems needing his investigation.

Although by no means a scholar, and at this time chiefly distinguished by mechanical skill, he was a good observer, with trained experience in making measurements and technical observations. He took full advantage of the opportunities laid before him, and from 1866 onward he wrote and published many papers on every kind of subject connected with Jerusalem. His earliest writings were in German; indeed, to the last he was never much at home except in his native tongue. His first English notes were in the *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* in 1877. As years went on, he contributed more and more to that publication, so that for some years past there has seldom been an annual volume with less than a dozen original papers or notes from his pen. During his later years he was definitely engaged by the English and the German exploration societies to make observations.

For many years Dr. Schick, as the only man with any suitable training, carried on the duties of government architect for the city, in the course of which he had unique opportunities for visiting every corner of the city. He was employed by the government to make extensive repairs in the Moslem holy places; and, in process of this work, he constructed an elaborate model of the *Haram*, or temple area. Later he made a model of the whole area, with rock contours, detachable buildings, etc., so that he could build up on the rock either the existing buildings, the temple of Herod, or the temple of Solomon. After he sold this model he constructed another, which is still in Jerusalem; and many visitors who have had the privilege of seeing it and of hearing it explained by the aged constructor realize what great knowledge, labor, and skill were employed by him in making the model conform to the descriptions in the Old Testament and in Josephus as he could best understand them. Difficulties in these accounts, or even contradictions, which would have staggered any ordinary man, were simply a stimulus to him. Each step, each window and door, had chapter and verse to justify its existence. The style of the architecture worked out by him was doubtless historically impossible; but the helpful suggestions of the work all must recognize.

The list of Dr. Schick's papers<sup>1</sup> during this long period shows how entirely devoted he was to the study of Jerusalem; there is

<sup>1</sup>A list of all his earlier works will be found in RÖHRICHT'S *Bibliotheca Geographica Palaestinae*, Berlin, 1890,

scarcely one paper which has not the name of the Holy City in its title. He will probably be most remembered by his models, his book *Der Tempelplatz*, the facts contained in which (apart from its theories) are very valuable, and by his connection with the finding of the Siloam inscription. The larger number of his papers are of the nature of short reports. The most important among them are those on "The Water Supply of Jerusalem"<sup>2</sup> and on "The Site of Calvary."<sup>3</sup> On this last subject his ideas underwent an entire change in later years, as he narates, and he came to consider the traditional site as at least probable. As a practical architect he has left his mark on several ancient buildings, notably the Church of the Sepulcher and the "Dome of the Rock," as well as upon a fair number of houses and institutions which he constructed. His archæological work needs to be gone over again in the light of recent discovery, and especially in the light of modern biblical criticism, of which Dr. Schick knew nothing. Many of his ideas were without doubt fanciful. But, if his writings can be properly revised and edited, the public will be astonished at the copious and important contributions which he has made to our permanent knowledge. Many things he has seen and figured have now passed away forever amid "modern improvements" and vandalism.

Dr. Schick received university honors from Tübingen, and decorations from no less than four crowned heads—the emperors of Germany, Austria, and Russia, and the king of Württemberg. Yet a more modest, unassuming, and quiet Christian gentleman it would be difficult to find. In Jerusalem he was beloved by all Christians of all churches, and also by Moslems and Jews. A visit to him and his temple model was one of the privileges of the modern pilgrim.

On December 24, 1901, he passed peacefully away, at the age of eighty; and his wife, to whom he had been united for over half a century, followed him ten days later. He leaves behind a large number of descendants, the children of his three married daughters, two of whom have made their homes in Jerusalem.

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JERUSALEM.

<sup>2</sup> "Die Wasserversorgung der Stadt Jerusalem," in the *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*, 1878, pp. 132-76.

<sup>3</sup> "The Site of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher," in the *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, 1898, pp. 145-54; "Reflections on the Site of Calvary," *ibid.*, 1893, pp. 119-28.